

## What is the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program?

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary conservation program that provides technical and financial assistance to landowners for developing, improving or managing wildlife habitat or for restoring natural ecosystems on eligible land.

## Who is eligible to participate?

To participate in WHIP, individuals must own or have control of the land under consideration.

Eligible lands include privately owned land; federal land when the primary benefit is on private or tribal land; state and local government land on a limited basis; and tribal land.

Land already enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, or Emergency Watershed Protection Program floodplain easement component is not eligible for WHIP.



*Clearing to create early successional old field habitat.*

## If I do not currently participate in other NRCS programs, can I participate in WHIP?

You are welcome to participate in the program. If you enroll in the program, you will need to meet certain conservation compliance and wetland conservation requirements.

## Targeted Habitats in Massachusetts

- Early successional (grasslands, old fields, early woodlands)
- Aquatic ecosystems
- Wetlands and riparian areas



*Patch cuts over several years create early successional forest habitat.*

## Examples of conservation practices eligible for cost-share

- Early successional habitat development and management
- Fish passage
- Wetland restoration
- Establishing grasses
- Riparian buffer establishment



*Successful aspen regeneration following a patch cut.*

## How does cost-share assistance work?

USDA and the participant enter into a cost share agreement that lasts from five to 10 years in length. Under the agreement:

- The participant agrees to maintain the cost-shared practice and allow USDA or its agent access to monitor the practice installation
- USDA agrees to provide technical assistance and pay up to 75 percent of the cost of implementing the conservation measures.



*An anadromous fish passage.*

## Will I be required to give the public access to land in the WHIP program?

No. Landowners can prevent trespass and control access by the general public. The landowner must allow NRCS access to the area to monitor the effectiveness of the practices during the agreement period.

## How do I apply?

Applications may be submitted, on a continual basis, to any USDA Service Center. A wildlife plan is prepared and ranked according to ecological, economic and social benefits. The highest ranked applications will be funded first.

For more information on the Massachusetts WHIP program visit:

[www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip.html](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip.html)



*An improved culvert restores tidal flow to a saltmarsh.*

## USDA-NRCS Offices

### Massachusetts State Office

451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002  
413-253-4350

### Barnstable Field Office

270 Communications Way, Unit 1G, Hyannis, MA 02601  
508-771-6476

### Greenfield Field Office

55 Federal Street, Room 290, Greenfield, MA 01301  
413-772-0384 ext 3

### Hadley Field Office

195 Russell Street, Suite B6, Hadley, MA 01035  
413-585-1000 ext 3

### Holden Field Office

52 Boyden Road, Room 10, Holden, MA 01520  
508-829-4477 ext 3

### Pittsfield Field Office

78 Center Street, Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA 01201  
413-443-1776 ext 3

### Westford Field Office

319 Littleton Road, Suite 302, Westford, MA 01886  
978-692-1904 ext 3

### West Wareham Field Office

15 Cranberry Highway, West Wareham, MA 02576  
508-295-5151 ext 2

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United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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## in Massachusetts

